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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Washington 25, D. C.

Office of the Director

NLE MR Case No. 98-218

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December 11, 1954

The Honorable Elmer B. Staats  
Executive Officer  
Operations Coordinating Board  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Staats:

For the last several years, the agencies in the executive branch of the Federal Government responsible for research in support of psychological warfare have made periodic efforts to strengthen coordination of their work. The report to the Psychological Strategy Board in 1952 on social science research in cold war operations, the joint support of the External Research Staff by the Departments of State and Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency, and the appointment, from time to time, of ad hoc interagency advisory panels on research have all contributed to closer cooperation among the agencies involved.

The striking similarity of the research requirements of the agencies engaged in propaganda, psychological warfare, and information activities was emphasized in a recent survey of the intelligence needs of the U. S. Information Agency. Much of the research undertaken to meet these needs is, of course, done within the Government, but a considerable amount is performed on contract with private research organizations. A continuing need exists for these agencies to relate their internal and external research, in order to assure that the latter complements and supplements the former.

Accordingly, all of us would stand to benefit if we could develop cooperatively a Government-wide program for external research in support of propaganda, psychological warfare and information activities. This program would be designed to supplement and strengthen existing efforts at external research coordination such as the State Department's quarterly inventories, informal inter-agency discussions and existing advisory panels. It would, of course, be clearly understood that the disposition of each agency's funds for external research to meet its needs is strictly its own responsibility.

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The program we envision would be highly flexible in that it would consist, as now, of projects developed to meet each agency's needs, separately financed by the various agencies concerned. But inherent in the program would be a mechanism through which each agency would have an opportunity to submit its major external research proposals for review to other agencies engaged in the same business before contracts are actually negotiated. The extent to which opinions expressed during such a review would be considered by the submitting agency would, of course, be a matter for that agency alone to decide. Such a program could provide constructive criticism of research proposals on a Government-wide basis; could reduce possible undesirable overlapping or duplication; and could relate external research more closely than is now possible to research being conducted within the Government.

If you are sympathetic with the foregoing suggestion, I would appreciate your designating a representative to explore it more fully to meet with Mr. Richard M. Bissell of this Agency. We will arrange a time and place for the meeting after I have heard from you.

I am sending similar letters to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the United States Information Agency, and the Director of the Foreign Operations Administration. If you wish, you may send copies of this letter to other members of the Operations Coordinating Board.

Sincerely yours,

Signed

Allen W. Dulles  
Director